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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1676

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE

RUEHZJ/HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6890

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 4875

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 4931

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2658

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5635

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC

RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 6380

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 7715

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 001277

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TBIO, XD, XE, XF, CH, IN, PK

SUBJECT: DELHI DIARY, APRIL 28-MAY 09

REF: A. SECSTATE 20964

[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 00731

[1](#)1. (U) Below is a compilation of political highlights from Embassy New Delhi for April 28-May 09, 2008 that did not feature in our other reporting, including:

- India and Pakistan Trade Tit-for-Tat Missile Tests
- Lok Sabha Speaker Withdraws Action Taken Against Unruly MPs
- Indian Custodial Deaths Increase 60% in 2007-2008
- India considers HIV/AIDS Anti-Discriminatory Bill
- PM Singh Speaks Out Against Female Feticide
- Manual for Training Police on Anti Human Trafficking

India and Pakistan Trade Tit-for-Tat Missile Tests

[1](#)2. (SBU) On May 8, India tested its 3000 km-range ballistic missile "Agni III", described by official Government of India and India media reports as a complete success. This is the third test of the Agni III, following the failed first test in July 2006 and the successful April 2007 test. Indian media quoted an Indian government official as claiming that the Agni-III's development is now complete and that it is ready for induction into India's arsenal, to be deployed in 2010-2011. The Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO), the Indian government agency responsible for developing the Agni, publicly announced in April its intentions to test-launch a so-called "Agni 4" ballistic missile with a reported range of 5000 km sometime in early 2009 (ref B).

[1](#)3. (SBU) The following day Pakistan test-fired its 350 km-range "Ra-ad" (Haft 8) air-launched cruise missile, in an apparent tit-for-tat display of strength to answer the Agni III launch. The Haft 8 was last test-launched by Pakistan in August, 2007.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment: This type of tit-for-tat testing between Pakistan and India is not unknown, but to follow up as quickly as one day afterwards is an unusually quick response even in South Asia. The last reaction nearing this haste was in on December 11, 2007, when Pakistan tested its 700 km-range "Babur" (Haft 7) cruise Missile five days after

India conducted a live-fire test of its indigenously-designed missile-defense missile. End Comment.

Lok Sabha Speaker Withdraws Action Taken Against Unruly MPs

15. (SBU) Tired of Parliamentary business being disrupted and being disregarded himself, Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee (CPI-M) on May 1 referred 32 cases of disorderly conduct against Members of Parliament (MPs) to the Committee of Privileges. In doing so, the Speaker was signaling that the time has come for him to take tough action to ensure that in the future Parliament functions smoothly and in accordance with the rules. On May 5, however, unable to stand up to the political pressure, Chatterjee backed down and withdrew the referrals against the unruly MPs, who were all members of the opposition and not his Communist Party of India (Marxist) or the ruling UPA government.

16. (SBU) During the last Parliamentary session, there were dozens of incidents where MPs stormed the house floor, used other disruptive tactics or simply stopped productive debate and business from taking place. However, the two incidents which prompted Chatterjee to take action occurred on April 24. The first incident was prompted by Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Brajesh Pathak, who posed a question to the Minister for Chemical and Fertilizers Ram Vilas Paswan and then would not afford him the opportunity to respond. The second incident involved 31 members of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition, who staged a protest against the

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UPA government on the issue of inflation. In lieu of attending the morning question hour, they formed a human chain around the Parliament building. In the afternoon, the NDA MPs trooped into the well, chanting slogans, disrupting the business of the house and completely disregarding the pleas of Speaker Chatterjee who tried to regain control of the floor.

17. (SBU) Speaker Chatterjee received harsh criticism for being partisan in his referrals and targeting only BSP or NDA members. Before MPs could protest in the House, Chatterjee adjourned Parliament until the afternoon and withdrew the cases in the interim.

18. (SBU) According to news reports, there has been a sharp decline in the amount of business conducted in the Lok Sabha, which is directly correlated with the disruptive behavior of MPs. The average number of bills passed each year has gone from 68 to 50 between 1992 and 2001. Last year, Parliament worked for the least number of days in the last eight years.

19. (SBU) Comment: Parliamentarians in India tend to use the floor to stage protest more than actually conduct business and the Speaker's job is to maintain the decorum of the House. However, Chatterjee stepped on a landmine when he decided to take action on this select group of MPs when in fact MPs from across the political spectrum take part in the ruckus that occurs frequently on the floor. In the process, the national agenda gets short shrift. End Comment.

Increase in Indian Custodial Deaths Increase 60% in 2007-2008

10. (U) Custodial deaths in India increased to 188 cases in 2007-2008 from 118 reported cases in 2006-2007 per Indian fiscal year reporting. Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Maharashtra registered the highest number of cases. UP reported a 300% increase in custodial deaths to 32 cases in 2007-2008 from 11 in 2006-2007. Maharashtra's numbers also increased from 21 to 25 in 2006-2007. Taken together, these two states, account for 30 percent of all reported custodial deaths in India. Gujarat, Assam, and Madhya Pradesh also reported cases of 16, 14, and 10 respectively.

¶11. (U) Comment: Several states including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Goa, Mizoram, Nagaland, Pondicherry, Andaman and Nicobar, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and Daman, and Diu officially reported no custodial deaths, despite allegations and reports to the contrary. Many state police forces in India have insufficient training and reportedly rely on torture as one of the more expedient and convenient way to resolve cases. Further, NGOs and international humanitarian organizations tell us that the cultural acceptance of torture in prisons coupled with poor prison conditions and subsequent custodial deaths call into question the credibility of India's criminal justice system. End Comment.

India considers HIV/AIDS Anti-Discriminatory Bill

¶12. (U) By law, discriminating against India's 3-6 million people living with HIV/AIDS is prohibited. In reality, however, discrimination is omnipresent. The media is beginning to report more stories about HIV positive people and their plight, such as a woman who was forced to give birth to a child outside of a hospital as the doctors at the Meerut Medical College in Uttar Pradesh refused to provide care to the patient. In response to mounting social pressure, the Ministry of Health will try to push an HIV/AIDS anti-discrimination bill through the next parliamentary session. The bill, drafted by activists, lawyers, NGOs and the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), provides for the rights to equality, autonomy, privacy and health, safe

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working environment and access to information for all HIV positive people.

¶13. (U) Comment: As India blossoms, the GOI must remember to include its most marginalized groups. And, as usual, passing a new law is only the beginning. Implementing the law and ensuring its people abide by its spirit could require years, if not a generation. End Comment.

PM Singh Speaks Out Against Female Feticide

¶14. (U) Proud father of three daughters, Prime Minister Singh publicly weighed in on April 28 against the "inhuman and uncivilized practice" of female feticide. Pleading with civil society, NGOs and the government, he warned that a country like India entering the 21 century could not possibly claim to be part of a civilized world if it concurrently condoned the practice of discriminating against women. Singh noted that even states such as Gujarat and Punjab, with growing economic prosperity and access to quality education, do not have correlating reductions in female feticide rates. Condemning social ills such as child marriage, dowry, and female illiteracy, Singh said they make Indian women extremely vulnerable and suggested the problem be addressed by social awareness at home and strict enforcement of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostics Techniques Act. He also called for the National Literacy Mission to be reoriented to improve female literacy and challenge the unbalanced sex ratio in India.

¶15. (U) Comment: While India's appalling rate of female feticide is not new news, it is noteworthy that even the PM is speaking out on the issue. He is also on the right track to suggest that valuing women is directly correlated to raising their economic worth in society through education. The more social and political might be used to elevate awareness of gender discrimination, the greater the likelihood that India can eventually close the gap in the worrying sex ratio. End Comment.

Manual for Training Police on Anti Human Trafficking

¶16. (U) UNODC released a Manual for training police on Anti Human Trafficking (AHT) in late April. This manual is part of a series of tools introduced by UNODC in partnership with the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in its ongoing G/TIP funded project to strengthen the law enforcement response against TIP through training and capacity building. The manual, designed to train police to be more sensitive when working with TIP victims, especially commercial sex workers, will be integral to police training programs and translated into regional languages. The well-organized manual provides a basic overview of trafficking and related concepts; outlines specific police do's and don'ts; describes appropriate police conduct, behavior, attitude and communication through training workshops; and provides train-the-trainers concepts for facilitators.

¶17. (U) Comment: UNODC, with USG and GOI funding, remains our flagship project to combat TIP in India. As a direct result of UNODC's work, NGOs tell us that they are beginning to see nominal improvements in law enforcement vis--vis TIP victims. While there is still a long road ahead, this is another step in the right direction. End Comment.

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